

Module 15:

Prescribing Food Instruments

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Overview

Introduction

This module will help you understand how WIC prescribes food instruments.

Learning Objectives

After completing this module the CNW will be able to:

- identify WIC authorized foods;
 - identify the main nutrients in WIC foods and describe their functions in the body;
 - describe how foods are selected to be included on the WIC food list;
 - identify the information printed on food instruments;
 - list the foods included in the food packages for the participant categories;
 - explain how changes in participant status affect food package content;
 - describe procedure for prescribing special foods and tailored food packages;
 - explain what documents to issue to participants, proxies and alternates;
 - show what food instruments are issued when a participant is disqualified; and
 - identify what food instrument to prescribe for a given participant.
-

Words that you may not know are **underlined. Definitions for these words can be found in the **Glossary** at the end of the module. (Note: Words are only underlined the first few times they appear in the text.)*

Food Instruments

Definition

A food instrument is a special check given at WIC that is used to buy WIC authorized foods.

Food instruments are sometimes called:

- “checks”, or
 - “vouchers”, or
 - “coupons.”
-

Description

Food instruments contain:

- a serial number,
 - the participant’s AIM ID number,
 - the client’s name,
 - first and last days to use,
 - type of food,
 - amount of food,
 - the maximum amount of money that can be spent for each Food Instrument, and
 - a participant signature line.
-

Learning Activity 1

To learn more about food instruments you may want to try **Learning Activity 1** found at the end of this module.

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WIC Authorized Foods

Definition

WIC authorized foods are the foods that participants may buy with their WIC food instruments. WIC staff sometimes call these foods “WIC allowed foods.”

List

WIC authorized foods include:

- milk
 - cheese
 - eggs
 - juices
 - cereal
 - peanut butter
 - dry beans and peas
 - tuna
 - carrots
 - infant formula
 - infant cereal
-

The Nutrients in WIC Foods

Definition

Nutrients are substances needed by the body for:

- energy,
 - growth,
 - maintenance and repair, or
 - regulation of body functions.
-

5 Nutrients

WIC foods are rich in certain nutrients. These nutrients are:

- calcium,
 - iron,
 - Vitamin A,
 - Vitamin C, and
 - Protein
-

Calcium

Calcium is a mineral. Minerals are nutrients needed in small amounts by the body to function.

Our body needs calcium to

- form bones and teeth,
 - help blood clot,
 - stimulate nerves,
 - prevent infections,
 - help muscles contract,
 - maintain normal blood pressure, and
 - maintain the heartbeat.
-

Iron

Iron is also a mineral.

Our body needs iron for:

- normal growth,
 - learning,
 - preventing infections, and
 - making hemoglobin (the substance that carries oxygen to the cells in the body).
-

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The Nutrients in WIC Foods (continued)

Vitamins

Vitamins are substances that are needed in very small amounts by our bodies to stay healthy.

Our body needs vitamins to:

- absorb and use other nutrients
- regulate body processes.

You will learn more about vitamins in the module *Basic Nutrition*.

Vitamin A

Vitamin A is needed to:

- see in the dark
 - develop bones and teeth
 - maintain skin and mucus membranes
 - prevent infections
-

Vitamin C

Vitamin C is needed to:

- improve iron absorption
 - heal wounds
 - strengthen blood vessels
 - prevent infections
 - help the body with bone growth
-

Protein

Protein is the basic structure found in our body. Almost everything in our bodies contains protein.

Our body needs protein to:

- build and maintain tissue
 - regulate body processes
 - fight infections
 - provide energy
-

Chart of WIC Foods

The chart on the next page shows the nutrients and the WIC foods that have these nutrients.

Selection of WIC Foods

Nutrients in WIC Foods

Nutrient	WIC Foods
Calcium	milk cheese infant formula some juices
Iron	cereal beans formula tuna
Protein	peanut butter dried beans eggs cheese milk infant formula tuna
Vitamin A	vegetable juice cereal infant formula carrots milk
Vitamin C	fruit juice infant formula carrots

Selection of WIC Foods (continued)

Who Chooses the WIC Foods?

The **United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)** sets rules for the kinds of foods the WIC Program can offer. These foods contain the nutrients most often low in the diets of low-income women, infants, and children.

The **Arizona WIC Program** uses these rules to decide on the specific foods that participants can buy with food instruments in Arizona.

How Are WIC Foods Chosen?

WIC chooses foods based on:

- nutrient composition,
 - availability,
 - acceptability,
 - appropriateness,
 - package size,
 - cost, and
 - variety.
-

Nutrient Composition

The food must meet the USDA WIC regulations and the specific Arizona WIC Program's requirements for how much of each nutrient the food contains.

Availability

The food must be available statewide.

For example, if a juice is only available in Mesa it could NOT be a WIC allowed food for Arizona.

Acceptability

The food must be acceptable to WIC participants.

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Selection of WIC Foods (continued)

Appropriateness

The food should be appropriate for the participant's category.

For example, orange juice would NOT be appropriate for a 4-month old infant and raw carrots would not be acceptable for a toddler.

Package Size

WIC chooses packages sizes so that participants can buy the full quantity or close to the full quantity of food allowed. Package sizes are also selected to get the most for the money.

Cost

The food should be of high quality but as economical as possible.

Variety

There should be adequate variety in a food type.

Learning Activity 2

To learn more about the WIC authorized foods you may want to try **Learning Activity 2** found at the end of this module.

Food Package Contents

Definition

A WIC food package is a combination of WIC authorized foods that are given to a participant.

Prescriptions

Food packages are prescribed based on the participant's:

- category,
 - age, and
 - nutritional need.
-

Descriptions

There are many WIC food packages. The *AIM Program* lists these packages by category. This listing gives the food package name and a basic description of the foods contained in each food package.

Prescribing Tailored Food Packages

Although you will most often prescribe one of the standard food packages, sometimes a participant will:

- not use all the foods prescribed,
- need other foods in place of those in the standard food package,
- need a food package that does not require refrigeration or storage, or
- need a food package designed for people with special medical conditions

When this happens, you will change the food package to meet the needs of the participant.

Learning Activity 3

To learn more about the different food packages you may want to try **Learning Activity 3** found at the end of this module.

Learning Activity 4

To learn more about the special food packages you may want to try **Learning Activity 4** found at the end of this module.

Authorized Representatives & Proxies

Authorized Representative/ Proxies

Sometimes a participant will not be able to come to her/his WIC appointment. S/he may not be able to go to an appointment because s/he:

- is sick,
 - has a work schedule that conflicts with the appointment,
 - is caring for a sick family member, or
 - does not have transportation to get to the appointment.
-

Authorized Representative

A second Authorized Representative is someone the participant has chosen to pick up and use the food instruments when the participant cannot do so.

The second authorized representative name is in AIM in the second authorized representative filed. The representative's name and signature are also on the WIC ID Folder. There is space in AIM and on the ID Folder for 2 authorized representatives.

The participant or the local agency should instruct the alternate on the correct way to use food instruments.

Proxies

A proxy is someone the participant chooses to pick up the food instruments. The proxy's name is NOT on the ID Folder.

The proxy's name is documented in the "Proxy" field in AIM, but only for that specific appointment.

A proxy **can** use the food instruments at the grocery store.

Differences Between Authorized Representatives & Proxies

There are some differences between second authorized representative and proxies. These are listed in the chart on the next page.

Continued on Next Page

Authorized Representatives & Proxies (continued)

Differences between Authorized Representatives & Proxies

Item	Second Authorized Representative	Proxy
Must sign ID Folder	Yes	No
Can pick up food instruments at WIC site	Yes	Yes
Must bring a note dated and signed by the participant giving permission to pick up food instruments	No	Yes
Can sign & use food instruments at the grocery store	Yes	Yes
Must attend class for participant	Yes**	Yes**
Name must be typed in each time in AIM	No (name appears in "2. Authorized representative" field in AIM.)	Yes

**** Class attendance is highly encouraged. Check to see what your agency's policy is regarding class attendance.**

Documents for Participants, Second Authorized Representatives & Proxies

Documents

There are several documents that you or the participant will need before you can issue food instruments. These are:

- the WIC ID Folder,
- written notes for proxies, and
- photo ID's for proxies.

WIC Authorization Folder

The WIC ID Folder, is the identification card given to the adult member that enrolls her/himself or a family member in WIC.

The ID Folder contains:

- family name,
- family ID number,
- local WIC agency name and address,
- individual participant names,
- individual ID numbers,
- adult family member's signature,
- second authorized representatives signatures, and
- appointment dates/times.

A participant must show the ID Folder:

- at the WIC site to get her/his food instrument and
- at the store to buy WIC foods.

Note from Proxy

To pick up food instruments at the WIC site a proxy must have a note from the participant. The note must include:

- statement giving the proxy permission to pick up the food instruments,
- the date, and
- the signature of the participant.

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Documents for Participants, Second Authorized Representatives and Proxies (continued)

Learning Activity 5

To learn more about some of these documents you may want to try **Learning Activity 5** found at the end of this module.

Disqualification

Definition

Disqualification is taking a certified participant or family off of the WIC Program when they do not meet eligibility criteria for continued participation.

Disqualification Times

A local agency may disqualify a participant:

- at a re-certification appointment or
- in the mid-certification period

Reasons for Disqualification

There are several reasons why a participant may be disqualified. These reasons are listed below.

Reason	Re-certification	mid-certification
No longer in a category served by WIC	√	√
Exceeds maximum income for eligibility	√	√
Fails to provide required documentation	√	
No longer has nutritional need	√	
Participant not present at appointment	√	
No longer in a priority served by local agency`	√	
Program abuse by participant, parent, guardian, caretaker, or representative of the participant		√
Dual participation		√

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Disqualification (continued)

Notification

Local agencies should consult with the State agency prior to taking action. In all cases where program abuse is alleged against the participant, the local agency shall send a copy of the Disqualification form and accompanying documentation to the State agency.

The effective date of disqualification shall be **15 days** after the notice is issued. If you suspect program abuse, please see your supervisor.

Food Instruments Issued

When a participant is disqualified from WIC s/he may be issued food instruments for the remainder of her/his certification period depending on the effective date of disqualification.

If 15 days or more remain before the participant's current food instruments expire (before the *Last Day to Use*), do NOT issue additional food instruments.

If fewer than 15 days remain before the participant's current food instrument expire (before the *Last Day to Use*), issue one month of food instruments to comply with the notice requirement.

Summary

Food Package Contents

Food instruments are special checks given at WIC that are used to buy WIC authorized foods. Food instruments are sometimes called “vouchers”, “checks”, or “coupons”.

WIC Authorized Foods

WIC authorized foods are the foods that participants may buy with food instruments.

They include:

- milk,
 - cheese,
 - eggs,
 - juices,
 - cereal,
 - peanut butter,
 - dry beans and peas,
 - tuna,
 - carrots,
 - infant formula, and
 - infant cereal.
-

Nutrients in WIC Foods

WIC foods are rich in:

- calcium,
 - iron,
 - Vitamin A,
 - Vitamin C, and
 - protein.
-

Selection of WIC Foods

WIC chooses foods based on:

- nutrient composition,
 - availability,
 - acceptability,
 - appropriateness,
 - package size,
 - cost, and
 - variety.
-

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Summary (continued)

Food Package Contents

A WIC food package is a combination of WIC allowed foods that are given to a participant based on the participant's category, age, and nutritional need.

Second Authorized Representatives & Proxies

Second Authorized Representatives and proxies are people the participant has chose to pick up and /or use WIC food instruments when the participant cannot do so.

Second authorized Representatives are listed in AIM and on the ID Folder and may use WIC food instruments at the grocery store.

Proxies must bring in a note signed by the participant to pick up food instruments at WIC. They cannot use food instruments at the grocery store.

Documents

There are several documents that a WIC staff person or a participant will need before food instruments can be issued. These are:

- the WIC ID Folder,
 - written notes for proxies, and
 - photo ID for proxies
-

Glossary

Second authorized representative- A second authorized representative is someone who the participant has chosen to pick up and/or use food instruments at the store when the participant cannot do so.

calcium- Calcium is the mineral needed by the body to form bones and teeth, help blood clot, stimulate nerves, maintain normal blood pressure, help muscles contract, and maintain the heartbeat.

disqualified- Disqualified is no longer qualifying to participate in the WIC Program.

disqualification- Disqualification is taking a certified participant or family off of the WIC Program when they do not meet eligibility criteria for continued participation.

food instrument- A food instrument is a special check given at WIC that is used to buy WIC authorized foods at WIC authorized grocery stores.

food packages- A WIC food package is a combination of WIC authorized foods that are given to a participant based on the participant's category, age and nutritional need.

infant formula- Infant formula is a specially made mixture of nutrients, in a powder or liquid form, given to infants when breastfeeding is not possible or breast milk is not sufficient.

iron- Iron is the mineral needed for normal growth, learning, preventing infections, and making hemoglobin for red blood cells.

mineral- Minerals are the nutrients needed to form body structures and help regulate chemical reactions in the body.

nutrient - A nutrient is a substance that is needed by the body for energy, growth, maintenance, and repair of tissues or regulation of body processes.

prescribing- Prescribing is selecting the appropriate food package for a participant.

protein- Protein is the nutrient needed to build and maintain tissue, regulate body processes, fight infections, and provide energy.

Glossary (continued)

proxy- A proxy is someone who the participant has asked to pick up food instruments when the participant cannot do so.

Vitamin- Vitamins are the nutrients needed to absorb and use other nutrients and regulate body processes.

Vitamin A- Vitamin A is a fat-soluble vitamin that helps develop healthy eyes, skin, mucous membranes, helps prevent infections, and helps develop bones and teeth.

Vitamin C- Vitamin C is a water-soluble vitamin that is needed to form collagen, help heal wounds, help develop gums and teeth, increase iron absorption, and strengthen blood vessels.

WIC authorized foods- WIC authorized foods are foods that participants may buy with food instruments.

WIC ID Folder- The WIC ID Folder, is the identification card given to the adult member that enrolls her/himself or a family member in WIC.

Progress Check

4. Match the following words to their definitions.

<u>Words</u>	<u>Definition</u>
_____ WIC authorized food	A. Foods participants may buy with food Instruments
_____ Nutrient	B. WIC “check” or “voucher”
_____ Food package	C. A combination of WIC authorized foods given to a participant
_____ WIC ID Folder	D. Substances needed by the body for energy, growth, maintenance repair, or regulation
_____ Food Instrument	E. Identification card given to the adult Member that enrolls her/himself or a family member in WIC

5. Put a check (✓) next to the WIC authorized foods.

_____ Milk	_____ Eggs
_____ Yogurt	_____ broccoli
_____ Infant cereal	_____ cheese
_____ carrots	_____ juice
_____ bread	_____ cereal
_____ peanut butter	_____ bananas
_____ spinach	_____ oranges
_____ tuna	_____ jam

Progress Check (continued)

6. Match the following WIC authorized foods with their primary nutrients.

_____ Juice	A Vitamin A
_____ Carrots	B Calcium
_____ Milk	C Vitamin C
_____ Eggs	D Iron
_____ Cereal	E Protein

WIC chooses foods based on: (Check [✓] all that apply.)

- _____ nutrient composition
- _____ availability
- _____ digestibility
- _____ acceptability
- _____ appropriateness
- _____ ready to use
- _____ cost
- _____ package size
- _____ variety

Progress Check (continued)

7. For the statements that follow, mark with a check [✓] those that are true for a second authorized representative or a proxy.

Statement	Second Authorized Representative	Proxy
Must sign ID Folder		
Must bring a note dated and signed by the participant to pick up food instruments		
Can pick up food instruments at WIC site		
Must attend class for participant		
Must show ID when picking up food instruments		
Can sign food instruments at the grocery store		
Can use food instruments at the grocery store		

Learning Activities

The following are included and are recommended for interactive learning:

- Learning Activity 1: Food Instruments
- Learning Activity 2: WIC Authorized Foods
- Learning Activity 3: Food Packages
- Learning Activity 4: Special Foods and Tailored Food Packages
- Learning Activity 5: WIC ID Folder

Activity 1: Food Instruments

Learning Objectives

After completing this activity, the CNW will be able to:

- Identify the parts of a food instrument
-

Instructions

1. Ask your mentor or supervisor for a sample WIC food instrument. (Your agency may have a laminated version of a food instrument available for training purposes.)
 2. Looking at the sample food instrument locate the following:
 - Participant ID number,
 - participant name,
 - first day to use,
 - last day to use,
 - draft number,
 - WIC allowed foods,
 - amount not to exceed, and
 - Signature line
 3. Use the form on the next page. Put a check mark next to each item as you find it on the sample food instrument and also write in the information for each item.
 4. Talk with your supervisor if you have any questions.
-

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Activity 1: Food Instruments (Continued)

Sample Food Instrument

Check (√)	Item	
	Participant ID Number	
	Participant Name	
	First Day to Use	
	Last Day to Use	
	Draft Number	
	Quantity of WIC Allowed Foods	
	Amount Not to Exceed	
	Purchase Price	
	Signature Line	

Activity 2: WIC Authorized Foods

Learning Objectives

After completing this activity, the CNW will be able to:

- identify the WIC authorized foods

Background

The *Arizona WIC Program WIC Allowed Food List* contains the list of WIC authorized foods. You will need to be familiar with the most current list of WIC authorized foods.

Instructions

1. Ask your supervisor for a copy of:
 - *The Arizona WIC Program WIC Allowed Food List.*
 2. Take this list with you when you go to the grocery store.
 3. Look for the WIC authorized foods.
 4. Write down each food, its size, and its price in the chart on the next page.
 5. Make sure to look for the allowed container sizes and quantities. (The grocery store you go to may NOT have all the allowed sizes.)
 6. Discuss your experience with your supervisor. Was it easy to find all the foods?
-

Activity 2: WIC Authorized Foods

Food	Size	Price

Activity 3: Food Packages

Learning Objectives

After completing this activity, the CNW will be able to:

- identify foods for 9 case studies
-

Background

There are many WIC foods. Each food package contains different combinations and/or quantities of foods.

The food package a participant gets depends on:

- category,
- age, and
- nutritional need.

Some tailored food packages must be prescribed by a health care provider and approved by the WIC nutritionist.

Instructions

1. Read each of the case studies on the following pages.
 2. List the foods that would be in the food package for each case study.
 3. If you need help talk to your supervisor.
-

Activity 3: Food Packages (Continued)

Case Study 1:

Mai Yang is 22 years old and expecting her first baby in 4 months.

Which foods should Mai get?

Case Study 2:

Lupe Hernandez is a 2-month-old, formula fed infant. Her mother comes back to the WIC clinic with a note from her doctor stating that Lupe is allergic to corn syrup and requesting that she get Good Start formula.

With authorization from the WIC Nutritionist, which foods should Lupe get?

Activity 3: Food Packages (Continued)

Case Study 3:

Keisha Johnson came to her WIC appointment in August and told you that she stopped breastfeeding her 8-month old son Kevin in July. He takes formula and solid food now.

Which foods should Kevin get in August?

--should Keisha get in August?

Case Study 4:

Jose is 3 months old. He is being breastfed by his mother Maria. She does not use any formula.

Which foods should Jose get?

--should Maria get?

Activity 3: Food Packages (Continued)

Case Study 5:

Ana Petrovich turns 1 year old this month. Her mother says she is drinking whole milk with no problem.

Which foods should Ana get?

Case Study 6:

Bui Nguyen is 7 months old. Bui's mother Tang, breastfeeds Bui and also gives him Enfamil infant formula 2 times a day.

Which foods should Bui get?

--should Tang get?

Activity 3: Food Packages (Continued)

Case Study 7:

Sylvia is 2 ½ years old. Her mother says she is still on infant formula. A note from her doctor says Sylvia needs Isomil.

Which authorization from the WIC Nutritionist, which foods should Sylvia get?

Case Study 8:

Emily Chang has a daughter Grace who is 3 months old. Emily does not breastfeed Grace at all. Grace is doing fine on formula with iron.

Which foods should Emily get?

--should Grace get?

Activity 3: Food Packages (Continued)

Case Study 9:

Keishari Parker is an underweight 2 ½ year old girl, drinking cow's milk. The nutritionist decides she needs a food package with more calories and food.

Which foods should Keishari get?

Activity 4: Tailored Food Packages

Learning Objectives

After completing this activity, the CNW will be able to:

- Identify the parts of a food instrument

Instructions

1. Read each of the case studies on the following pages.
 2. Identify the correct foods to meet the special needs for each case study .If you need help talk to your supervisor.
-

Activity 4: Tailored Food Packages (Cont)

Case Study 1:

Belinda Jones is pregnant. She tells you she is homeless.

Which foods should Belinda get?

Case Study 2:

Andrew Nguyen is 2 years old. His mother has a written note stating that Andrew is lactose intolerant.

Which foods should Andrew get?

Activity 4: Tailored Food Packages (Cont)

Case Study 3:

Sally Chun is pregnant. She shows you a written note from her doctor telling you she is lactose intolerant. She does not like acidophilus milk.

Which foods should Sally get?

Case Study 4:

Jesus Jimenez is 3 months old. His mother has stopped breastfeeding. She brings in a prescription from his doctor for a specific formula since Jesus is lactose intolerant.

Which foods should Jesus get?

Activity 5: WIC ID Folder

Learning Objectives

After completing this activity, the CNW will be able to:

- Assess a child's growth pattern, and
 - Assess the child's biochemical, clinical, and dietary status.
-

Background

WIC ID Folder.

Instructions

1. Ask your supervisor for a copy of the *WIC ID Folder*.
 2. Have your supervisor explain how this document is used in your agency.
 3. If you have any questions, talk to your supervisor.
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Progress Check Answers

1. Match the following words to their definitions.

<u>Words</u>	<u>Definition</u>
<u> A </u> WIC authorized food	A. Foods participants may buy with food Instruments
<u> D </u> Nutrient	B. WIC “check” or “voucher”
<u> C </u> Food package	C. A combination of WIC authorized foods given to a participant
<u> E </u> WIC ID Folder	D. Substances needed by the body for energy, growth, maintenance repair, or regulation
<u> B </u> Food Instrument	E. Identification card given to the adult member that enrolls her/himself or a family member in WIC

2. Put a check (✓) next to the WIC authorized foods.

<u>✓</u> Milk	<u>✓</u> Eggs
<u> </u> Yogurt	<u> </u> broccoli
<u>✓</u> Infant cereal	<u>✓</u> cheese
<u>✓</u> carrots	<u>✓</u> juice
<u> </u> bread	<u>✓</u> cereal
<u>✓</u> peanut butter	<u> </u> bananas
<u> </u> spinach	<u> </u> oranges
<u>✓</u> tuna	<u> </u> jam

Progress Check Answers (continued)

3. Match the following WIC authorized foods with their primary nutrients.

<u>C</u>	Juice	A	Vitamin A
<u>A</u>	Carrots	B	Calcium
<u>B</u>	Milk	C	Vitamin C
<u>E</u>	Eggs	D	Iron
<u>D</u>	Cereal	E	Protein

4. WIC chooses foods based on: (Check [☒] all that apply.)

☒ nutrient composition

☒ availability

☐ digestibility

☒ acceptability

☒ appropriateness

☐ ready to use

☒ cost

☒ package size

☒ variety

5. For the statements that follow, mark with a check [✓] those that are true for an alternate or a proxy.

Statement	Alternate	Proxy
Must sign ID Folder	✓	
Must bring a note dated and signed by the participant to pick up food instruments		✓
Can pick up food instruments at WIC site	✓	✓
Must attend class for participant		
Must show ID when picking up food instruments	✓	✓
Can sign food instruments at the grocery store	✓	✓
Can use food instruments at the grocery store	✓	✓